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Letter dated 6 September 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Liberia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to forward herewith a self-explanatory letter addressed to you by Dahkpannah Charles Ghankay Taylor, President of the Republic of Liberia (see annex).

The original letter has been transmitted through the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Monrovia.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Lami **Kawah**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

01-53065 (E) 070901

Annex to the letter dated 6 September 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Liberia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am once again constrained to raise the issue of the national security of Liberia with the Security Council. As you may recall, a general disarmament occurred in Liberia and was conducted by ECOMOG and UNOMIL prior to the 1997 elections. Subsequently, ECOMOG and UNOL, with the consent of the Government of Liberia, carried out the destruction of all arms and ammunition collected under the disarmament exercise. It was expected that the processes of disarmament and arms destruction would contribute in a positive manner to the consolidation of peace and security in post-war Liberia. However, and to the contrary, dissidents opposed to the constitutionally elected Government of Liberia viewed the process as an opportunity to wage war against a vulnerable people and thus carried out armed attacks into Lofa County, Liberia, from across the Guinean border. These attacks began in 1999 immediately following the arms destruction exercise and continue unabated today.

As a consequence of the Lofa war, hundreds have been killed, thousands of Liberians have fled to neighbouring countries as refugees and over 300,000 persons have been displaced. Additionally, rehabilitated schools, hospitals, public buildings and private property have been destroyed. Villages have been burnt, farms destroyed and all manner of atrocities have been committed against innocent citizens by the dissidents. Today, a major humanitarian crisis exists where thousands of internally displaced persons from Lofa County are without shelter during this raining season. Malnutrition and disease abound owing to the lack of adequate food and clean drinking water.

The Government of Liberia is pleased to note that the Security Council did acknowledge in its press statement issued by the President of the Council on 16 August 2001 (SC/7120) the existence of the Lofa war and the resulting humanitarian consequences.

Needless to say, the Government of Liberia has a constitutional responsibility to provide for the protection of its sovereign territory, and the life and property of its citizens. The inherent right to self-defence is also expressed in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, in which it is stated that, "Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security".

The Government of Liberia has on several occasions notified the Security Council of the attacks against its territory. Yet, the Council has failed to take any measures to maintain the peace and security of Liberia. Furthermore, the Government of Liberia has informed the Council that the current United Nations arms embargo imposed upon Liberia has gravely impaired the Government's capacity to defend its territory. In view of the above, the Government has requested a limited waiver of the arms embargo to permit it to import essential military supplies for the sole purpose of its self-defence. Again, the Council has failed to grant such a waiver.

The Government of Liberia herewith, once again, requests the Security Council to grant a limited waiver of the arms embargo imposed by Council resolution 1343 (2001) to permit the importation of essential military supplies under United Nations monitoring to be used for the sole purpose of self-defence. The current state of Liberia's security requires urgent action on the part of the Government of Liberia to defend its territorial integrity in keeping with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

In view of the gravity of this situation, it is the hope of the Government of Liberia that this matter will claim the urgent attention of the Council and receive appropriate consideration.

(*Signed*) Dahkpannah Dr. Charles Ghankay **Taylor**